GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
PANCHAYATI RAJ
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1653
ANSWERED ON:10.12.2008
MOU WITH AFGHANISTAN ON LOCAL GOVERNANCE
Yerrannaidu Shri Kinjarapu

Will the Minister of PANCHAYATI RAJ be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government proposes to sign a Memorandum of Understanding(MoU) with the Government of Afghanistan on Local Governance;

(b) if so, the details thereof alongwith the salient features of the Agreement;and

(c) the benefits likely to accrue as a result thereof?

Answer

MINISTER OF PANCHAYATI RAJ(SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR)

(a): A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the Government of Republic of India and the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan on Cooperation in the field of Local Governance was signed by the Minister of Panchayati Raj,Government of India and the Minister of Rural Rehabilitation and Development,Government of Afghanistan on 17th May, 2008 at Kabul.To operationalize the MoU,a set of agreed conclusions were also signed.

(b): The salient features of the MoU are as under:

i) The parties shall set up, at the official level,an India-Afghanistan Joint Working Group on Local Governance (JWG).

ii) The JWG will recommend a schedule of activities for bilateral exchanges between India and Afghanistan to the Joint Forum on Local Governance with the Minister of Panchayati Raj of the Government of India and the Minister of Rural Rehabilitation and Development,Government of Afghanistan as its Co-Chairs.

iii) The JWG will also recommend technical assistance programmes for strengthening local self governance in Afghanistan including capacity building of individuals,institutions and elected representatives of local administration focusing on areas relating to micro-planning,devolution of powers and funds,as well as mobilization of resources.

(c): Both Afghanistan and India will stand to benefit from sharing of their respective experiences in the area of Local Governance.It will also be a step in the direction of improving bilateral relations between the two SAARC countries.